

Serial No.: 10/007,093
Examiner: Meless NMN Zewdu

In the claims:

1. (Currently Amended) In a radio communication system having a mobile station operable to communicate by way of a first network pursuant to a first-network communication service subscription, the first network operable pursuant to a first communication-standard protocol and the first network coupled to a second network, the second network operable pursuant to a second communication standard protocol, an improvement of apparatus for facilitating invocation of a second-network service, resident at a second-network service control point, by the mobile station, said apparatus comprising:

a bridge mechanism coupled to receive a first-network-generated request for invocation of the second-network service by the mobile station, said bridge mechanism at least for selectably initiating authorization of the mobile station to involve the second-network service, the bridge mechanism comprising:

a first communication-standard protocol message detector, said first communication-standard protocol message detector for detecting the first communication-standard protocol message that requests the invocation of the second-network service;

a second communication-standard, protocol-request message generator for generating a second communication standard protocol-request message for communication to the second-network service control point to request invocation of the second-network service by the mobile station;

a second communication-standard, protocol-response message detector for detecting a second communication-standard protocol-response message generated by the second-network service control point and returned to said bridge mechanism; and

a first communication standard, protocol-response message generator coupled to receive indications of detection by said second communication-standard, protocol-response message detector of the second communication-standard protocol-response message, said first communication-standard protocol-response message generator for generating a first communication standard-protocol response message indicative of a value of the second communication-standard protocol response message.

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2. (Canceled).
3. (Canceled)
4. (Canceled)
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11. (Canceled).
12. (Canceled).
13. (Canceled).
14. (Canceled).
15. (Canceled).
16. (Canceled).
17. (Canceled).
18. (Canceled).
19. (Canceled).
20. (Canceled).

21. (New) In a radio communication system having a mobile station operable to communicate by way of a first network pursuant to a first-network communication service subscription, the first network operable pursuant to a first communication-standard protocol and the first network coupled to a second network, the second network operable pursuant to a second communication standard protocol, an improvement of apparatus for facilitating invocation of a second-network service, resident at a second-network service control point, by the mobile station, said apparatus comprising:

a bridge mechanism coupled to receive a first-network-generated request for invocation of the second-network service by the mobile station, said bridge mechanism at least

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for selectably initiating authorization of the mobile station to involve the second-network service, the bridge mechanism comprising:

a first functional part functionally operable pursuant to the first communication-standard protocol and a second functional part functionally operable pursuant to the second communication-standard protocol, wherein the first network is constructed pursuant to a communication standard that defines a media gateway and wherein the first functional part comprises media gateway functionality;

the second network is constructed pursuant to a communication standard that defines a softswitch and wherein the second functional part comprises softswitch functionality; and

the second-network service comprises a prepaid calling service and wherein the request for the invocation of the second-network service to which said bridge mechanism is coupled to receive comprises a request for the invocation of the prepaid calling service.

22. (New) The apparatus of claim 21 wherein the first network comprises a registry at which service-subscription information associated with the mobile station is stored, the service-subscription information including an indication of association of the mobile station with the second-network service, and wherein the request for invocation of the second-network service to which said bridge mechanism is provided thereto subsequent to access to the service-subscription information stored at the registry.

23. (New) The apparatus of claim 21 wherein the request for the invocation of the second-network service is detected by the first functional part of said bridge mechanism.

24. (New) The apparatus of claim 21 wherein the authorization selectably initiated by said bridge mechanism is provided by the second functional part of said bridge mechanism.

25. (New) The apparatus of claim 21 wherein the authorization selectably initiated by the second functional part of said bridge mechanism comprises a second-communication-

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standard protocol-formatted request routable by the second functional part to the second-network service control point.

26. (New) In a method for communicating in a radio communication system having a mobile station operable to communicate by way of a first network pursuant to a first-network communication service subscription, the first network operable pursuant to a first communication-standard protocol and the first network coupled to a second network, the second network operable pursuant to a second communication-standard protocol, an improvement of a method for facilitating invocation of a second-network service, resident at a second-network service control point, by the mobile station, said method comprising:

detecting a first-communication-standard protocol message from the first network to request invocation of the second-network service; and

translating the first-communication-standard protocol message to a second-communication-standard protocol message representative of the request for the invocation of the second-network service for routing to the second-network service control point; and

selectably granting the request for the invocation of the second-network service subsequent to the second-network accessing a registry of the first network which service-subscription information associated with the mobile station is stored, the service-subscription information including an indication of association of the mobile station with the second-network.

27. (New) The method of claim 26 wherein the second-network service comprises a prepaid calling service and wherein the request for the invocation of the second-network service comprises a request for the invocation of the prepaid calling service.

28. (New) The method of claim 26 comprising the further operation of:
generating a grant message at the second-network service control point, the grant message formatted pursuant to the second communication standard protocol.

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29. (New) The method of claim 28 comprising the further operation of:
converting the grant message into a first-communication-standard protocol-formatted
message for routing through the first network.